

PICTURES AND THEIR PLAYERS ---- NOTES OF THE STUDIOS

High Lights and Shadows in News of Screen Drama

Revival of Movie Business Shown in Activities of Small Independent Companies.

BY FRANK VREBLAND.

THE movie business is beginning to pick up once more, and press agents will soon be in full cry again. In the last two weeks there has been a stirring acceleration in the industry as when a flivver is stepped on and has its feelings hurt. This has been due to the sudden irruption into the field of small independent companies who were once regarded as undesirable aliens but who now are regarded as the saviors of the film fans who might otherwise have been compelled to stay home at night and try to get acquainted with their families.

The change in the complexion of the cinema situation has come about with the suddenness and peculiar twist of a ride in a municipal bus. When the slump in the movie market came the big companies, through difficulty in financing and through a desire to concentrate on a new nostrum, labelled "fewer and better pictures," curtailed on the production of films until many players and directors were thrown out of work and wondered what was to become of the country. Meanwhile, the exhibitors, who had helped to bring about this reduction by refusing to pay the high rentals demanded for showing girls running rampant on the screen, had to keep pouring out their silver sheels, the maintenance of the justly famed American good humor demanded it. Here is where the independent companies began swarming to remove the large aching void that threatened to drive the country back to the almshouse for entertainment.

In the last few months about fifteen small organizations have sprung to arms almost overnight in the East, and as many more are beginning to chase air around the lot out West. Actors are being employed again, though at considerably atrophied salaries, and directors feel free to indulge a taste for fancy vests once more. Continuity and subtitle writers have been besieged with more offers to do work than they could readily handle with their duty to the world series to be fulfilled.

Some of the organizers of these companies have had experience in the dissemination of charm preserved in salubrious, but others are hopelessly ignorant and, therefore, not inclined to worry. Word has been passed around among them that there's money in the movie business. But they don't intend to throw away much of their own money in it, for they have small organizations and aim to spend only \$25,000 on each picture—a mere rag in the wind in these days of \$100,000 pictures—and they mean to spread that amount pretty thin. But they are keeping the film theatres comfortable in the region of their weekly programmes at reasonable rates, and they are bringing the cinema trade back to the early days when there were no large companies and numerous small concerns scurried around the map with little but optimism and a camera.

Plans also are being laid to bring production on a large scale out of its coma, and among the early signs of next spring may be noted announcements from important companies that "the turn of the tide has now come and the sea is running more strongly than ever in the movie business." Famous Players-Lasky is contemplating throwing open its huge Long Island City studio to the music of a mammoth and grand Famous Players studio in West fifty-sixth street after relegating it to the hollow glory possessed by saloons for almost a year. Some of the office and mechanical staffs are still haunting the building, and the lone company has occasionally shuffled about in a hushed way amid the echoing silence, but the high cost of keeping it heated has held it in the awesome isolation of a mausoleum.

By spring D. W. Griffith probably will have embarked on a new adventure in photographic pastels, for "The Two Orphans," his latest work, probably will be on the market and drawing gallons of tears by then. The Misses Lillian and Dorothy Gish and Joseph Schildkraut have been working long hours on the picture at the Manhattan studio, and it is expected that around Christmas they will be ready to appear in silence on any screen.

The reason has just leaked out why Griffith, with all his love of the spectacular, should come to grips with "The Two Orphans" in the studio. He is amalgamating it with the French Revolution. The original plan was not precisely of this day and generation, though it was close to the edge, and bearing as it does on the profranchise of the French nobility, it lends itself very readily to being dragged into that "relic" and then of course there's always the "Marsellaise" to aid in stimulating an audience's enthusiasm in the musical accompaniment to the picture.

So Griffith has been drawing on the populace of Westchester heavily to put the French Revolution over with a bang and calling upon the staid and home-loving residents of that county to assume the ferocity of a Parisian mob and forget their respectability.

Another "cut-back" to the ante-bellum days of the movies, when split reels were in vogue, showing the life of an ant, the latest pictures of one of those fascinating automobiles attaining sixty miles an hour, and the working day of a vamp, is contained in the announcement that Mrs. Nazimova has begun work on her first pulsations for United Artists, and that it will be a double bill in which Oscar Wilde's "Salome" and Ibsen's "A Doll's House" will be antidotes for each other.

In connection with Mrs. Olga Petrova's recurrence in the spoken drama, which happened last week at Columbus, Ohio, a story is floating along the Broadway stream concerning the way in which she came to the movie from her. After finishing her last picture—where Mrs. Petrova didn't know at the time would be her final flutter—she gave a dinner for a large number of exhibitors, who include men who are often more polished at turning a schmeer out of doors than turning a phrase. When everything had been going most harmoniously a pause occurred in the crunching of teeth and the star became more reckless than Lew Cody.

She arose and invited the exhibitors to criticize her pictures, saying that she desired to have her soul stirred up for its own good. Then the exhibitors, forgetting that they had just eaten out of her hand, struggled with the language in dealing with her films until she seemed like only a speck on celluloid. Then Mrs. Petrova decided it was time to move on.

Nazimova in "Camille," "Bits of Life" and "Under the Lash" to Be Screened



"Theodora," "Peter Ibbetson" and "Nobody's Fool" Among Films Continuing.

MARSHALL NEILAN'S production, "Bits of Life," will introduce the magazine idea to the screen at the Capitol this week. It offers the combined efforts of four authors, the episodes chosen being Thomas McMorrow's "The Bad Samaritan," published by the *Popular Magazine*; Walter Trumbull's "The Man Who Heard Everything," which appeared in *Smart Set*; Hugh Wiley's *Saturday Evening Post* story "Hop," and Marshall Neilan's original story, "The Strange Adventure."

The photoplay contains four elements, that of satire, comedy drama, melodrama and farce, connected by a general theme. Each of the episodes has a separate cast. The outstanding characterization is that of Lon Chaney. The list includes Wesley Barry, Lon Chaney, John Bowers, Teddy Sampson, Miss Edythe Chapman, Noah Beery, Miss Harriet Hammond, Rockliffe Fellowes and Miss Anna May Wong. "Snow-Bound Yosemite," a Sunset-Buried picture in colors, is another offering.

Mme. Alla Nazimova in a modernized version of "Camille," the famous novel and play by Alexandre Dumas the younger, has been selected as the principal film play at the Rivoli, Broadway. Duse, Rejane, Clara Morris, Modjeska and Ethel Barrymore have appeared in this role. June Mathis adapted the story to the screen and Ray C. Smallwood directed for Metro. Natcha Rambova contributed settings. Rudolph Valentino plays the leading male role, and Arthur Hoyt, Zeffie Tilbury, Rex Cherryman and Edward Connelly are in the cast of principals. Tony Sarg's *Almanac*, "The Vamp," will be another screen novel.

Miss Constance Talmadge will be starred at the Strand Theatre in "Woman's Place," a new comedy by John Emerson and Anita Loos, in which she runs for Mayor. Her supporting cast includes Kenneth Harlan, Howard Short, Miss Florence Short and Miss Ina Rorke. Victor Fleming directed. Additional films will be a new comedy and a new scenic study called "Snow-Bound Yosemite."

Miss Gloria Swanson is the star of "Under the Lash," the Paramount picture founded on "The Shulamite," which opens at the Rialto to-day. She appears as the second wife of a fanatical old farmer in a South African household where the Bible and the lash rule. J. E. Nash made the screen adaptation from the novel, "The Shulamite," by Alice and Claude Askew, and the dramatization is by Edward Knoblock and Mr. Askew. In the cast supporting the star are Mahlon Hamilton, Russell Simpson, Lillian Leighton and Lincoln Steadman.

A Harold Lloyd comedy, "Breaking Into Broadway," is also on the bill.

With the production yesterday of "Peter Ibbetson" starring Miss Ellie Ferguson and Wallace Reid, and an elaborate programme of music, dancing and supplemental pictures prepared by Hugo Rosenfeld, the Criterion becomes a reserved seat, two-day theatre. George Du Maurier's story was filmed for Paramount by George Fitzmaurice and has, in addition to the stars, a cast that includes Elliott Dexter, Monte Love, George Fawcett and Miss Dolores Costello.

Douglas Fairbanks in "The Three Musketeers" remains at the Lyric.

"Theodora," the spectacular Italian spectacle of ancient Byzantium, with Miss Rita Jolivet in the role of the Empress, enters its second week at the Astor, where it is being presented in definitely by Goldwyn.

Miss Marie Prevost in "Nobody's Fool," Universal picture, remains at the Central for a second week.

Music Programmes In Picture Theatres

At the Strand Victor Herbert, composer, will appear as guest conductor this week. The numbers he will conduct are examples of his own work.



MISS MARIE PREVOST in "Nobodys Fool" CENTRAL

Feature Pictures at Broadway Houses

CAPITOL—"Bits of Life."
RIVOLI—"Camille."
STRAHD—"Woman's Place."
RIALTO—"The Shulamite."
CRITERION—"Peter Ibbetson."
LYRIC—"The Three Musketeers."
CENTRAL—"Nobody's Fool."

Ancient Byzantium Art Reproduced in Screen Spectacle

Back of the presentation of the big Italian screen spectacle, "Theodora," at the Astor Theatre there is an interesting story of how Samuel Goldwyn, president of the Goldwyn Pictures Corporation, and his faith in the success of the picture even before he had seen it in its entirety led to its being obtained by his company.

Mr. Goldwyn went to Italy and spent nearly six weeks in Rome, visiting the miniature city of ancient buildings and wonderful triumphs of Oriental architecture which had been erected on the shore of the Lake of Albano, near Rome.

"I visited the scene of this picture every morning," said Mr. Goldwyn at the Astor Theatre. "I saw it made bit by bit. I saw and talked with Brasini, the famous architect of the Vatican, who was loaned for this work through a special order from his Holiness the Pope. It is the first time Brasini had ever done any architectural work outside of the Vatican. I saw troops of the Italian cavalry ordered by the War Department of the Italian Government, sent to this miniature city of the screen in order to preserve order among the thousands of persons employed as extras. I saw the lions loose in order to get the spectacular effect. The picture operators were in cages and men with guns were in the background ready to shoot any lions in case they escaped from their trainers. Fortunately only two minor accidents took place. The cage of one motion picture operator was knocked over, and on another occasion an Italian super fell from the balcony right among the lions, but the lions were more frightened than he was and scattered, leaving him unharmed. He was speedily rescued with ropes."

"I was so impressed with the wonderful work of Ambrosio as a director that

mainder of the musical programme. Percy J. Starnes will preside over the organ.

The music programme prepared to accompany Nazimova in "Camille" opens with the second and fourth movements of Tchaikowsky's "Fourth Symphony," played by the Rivoli orchestra under Frederick Stahlberg and Emanuel Baer. Grace Hoffman, soprano, and Fred Jagel, tenor, will sing a duet from "La Traviata" and Carlo Enciso, tenor, will sing Massenet's "Elegie" with cello obbligato played by M. Maszki.

The programme for the showing of "Under the Lash" at the Rialto opens with Wagner's "Tannhauser" overture, played by the orchestra under Hugo Rosenfeld and Joseph Littau. Gladys Rice, soprano, will sing Del Riego's "Oh, Dry Those Tears," and Lillian Powell will appear in a dance number.

A pretentious ballet number will be one of the high lights of the musical programme which S. L. Rothwell will present at the Capitol. It is Bohmann's "Papillon." Alexander Oumansky, ballet master, has arranged the choreography. The principal roles will be danced by Mlle. Gambarelli, Doris Niles, Thalia Zanon and Mr. Oumansky. For the incidental characters of the carnival Masque, Lolita Armand, Myrtle Immel, Felicie Sorel, Dorothy Lane and Paul Oswald, ballet master. The Criterion ensemble assists. In the prologue to the feature film "Vera Myers," Paul and the ensemble dance a minuet.

At the Criterion "The Enchanted Forest" serves as an overture, a combination of ballet and song, with stage settings by Nicholas de Lipsey. The dancers are Vera Myers, Grace Eastman, Ruth Matlock, Lolita Armand, Myrtle Immel, Felicie Sorel, Dorothy Lane and Paul Oswald, ballet master. The Criterion ensemble assists. In the prologue to the feature film "Vera Myers," Paul and the ensemble dance a minuet.

George Richardson, barytone, sings "La Romanesque" and Miriam Lax, soprano, and Beatrice E. Wright, alto, sing the overture from Tchaikowsky's "Pique Dame." The ensemble and ballet present German's "The Shepherd's Lament" and George Richardson, barytone, sings "La Bergerie."

I said to him the third day: 'We must handle this picture in America.' At that time the picture was without titles and the different scenes that were taken widely apart were not even cut. I made the contract through his financial representative.

"The picture in its final state, but with no titles except the Italian directions, was finally shipped to our studios in California, and it required six months of the hardest kind of work to assemble this picture, retitle it with English titles and finally prepare it for the American public. It originally was more than 20,000 feet in length, and we had to cut this down to eight reels. It cost 15,000,000 lire to produce the picture, which at the old rate of exchange would be \$3,000,000, and even now represents an investment of \$800,000 in American money. "It would be impossible to produce a picture of this sort in America. We

"Humphreys' Number 'Forty' Induces Repose, and Natural, Refreshing Sleep. For Insomnia, Sleeplessness, Wakefulness, Restlessness. No Narcotic, No Opium, No Dope, No habit forming Drugs, Strictly Homeopathic. 30c. and \$1.00, at all Drug Stores, or sent on receipt of price, or C. O. D. Parcel Post.

Humphreys' "Seventy-seven" breaks up Colds that hang on. 30c. and \$1.00, at all Drug Stores, or sent on receipt of price, or C. O. D. Parcel Post. Humphreys' Home, Medicine Co., 158 William Street, New York, Medical Book Free.

have not the facilities, the architectural genius or the artist who could imagine and reproduce such amazing restorations of ancient Byzantium art. These buildings are of a period that is neither Roman nor Oriental. The sixth century has an architecture all its own, and this Byzantium architecture of the time of Theodora is perhaps the most difficult of all to reproduce."

Many Approve the Keith Anniversary

Quick response has been made to the Keith Vaudeville Circuit's announcement that, in view of the suggestion of public officials, artists and associates, E. F. Albee had decided to launch a celebration of its third of a century anniversary. From many sources have come letters and telegrams of approval and interest.

Giulio Gatti Casazza, general director of the Metropolitan Opera Company, sent the following telegram to Mr. Albee:

"Congratulations upon your third of a century celebration of the Keith Vaudeville Circuit. Your organization has developed some admirable singers and a new and constantly growing musical public, and the lyric theatres of your country are already indebted to your organization for both artists and audiences of permanent value to music. Your ambitious plans for the future are worthy of your past history and I am heartily in accord with your plan to commemorate both."

David Belasco wrote: "Congratulations. You not only have the gratitude of the millions upon millions of American people to whom you have brought happiness and pleasure during these past decades, but you have the real admiration and esteem of your confreres, who have watched the growth and artistic expansion of your distinguished branch of the theatre with wonderment."

Charles B. Dillingham sent the following telegram: "Permit me to be among the first to congratulate you upon the great achievement conjured up in one's mind in contemplating the notable anniversary of the wonderful institution you have built up is about to celebrate. It is a living vital monument to your zeal, moral strength and business acumen. Furthermore, the anniversary writes a notable and brilliant page in the history of the American stage."

Among the hundreds of similar letters and telegrams were messages from Postmaster-General Wm. H. Hayes, Gov. Samuel C. Tilden, Mayor John A. Mitchell, Mayor Hylan, Mayor Galvin of Cincinnati, Mayor Garner of Providence, Joseph P. Tumulty, associate and secretary of ex-President Wilson; Special Deputy Police Commissioner Rodman Wanmaker, Secretary of the Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Farmer of Syracuse, the commandant of the Third Naval District and officers high in the army and in civil service. Mrs. W. K. Van Hook, Mrs. Over Harlan and Miss Anna Morgan also were among the first to send congratulations and approval to Mr. Albee.

MISS BORDONI RETURNS WITH NEW SONGS FOR VAUDEVILLE



A quintet of headliners will rule at the Palace this week. Miss Irene Bordoni, just back from Paris with new songs and jewels, will interweave French, Spanish and English songs in a new number produced by E. Ray Goetz, "The Evolution of a Pianist," assisted by Leon Varvara. Karyl Norman will do his "Creole Fashion Plate." Paul Whitman and his Palais Royal orchestra will play for a third week. Eddie Buzzell will play "A Man of Affairs," a play in four scenes by Daniel Kussell. Charlie Chaplin will appear in his latest comedy film, "The Idle Class." Others will be Bert and Lew Fitzgibbon, Billy Glason, Rolis and Royce and the Bob Pender Troupe.

The chief acts at other vaudeville houses follow: RIVERSIDE—Avon Comedy Four, Charles King and Miss Lila Rhodes. COLONIAL—Harry Fox, William Seabury and company. EIGHTY-FIRST STREET—Ray Raymond and company, Solly Ward and company. ALHAMBRA—Franklin Ardell and company, Frederick Burton. HAMILTON—Ed Gallagher and Al Shean, Lightner Girls and Alexander. PROCTOR'S FIFTH AVENUE—Mignonne, Kokin and Corbin. PROCTOR'S TWENTY-THIRD STREET—"Fads and Frolics," Miss Laurie Ordway.

MISS KARYL NORMAN at the PALACE

MISS LILLIAN FITZGERALD at the WINTER GARDEN

PROCTOR'S FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET—Tom Smith and company, Charlie Chaplin in the photoplay, "The Idle Class." PROCTOR'S ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH STREET—"Miss Reelista," Charlie Chaplin in "The Idle Class."

Faversham Calls Play "Duel of Infidelity"

It is not unusual that William Faversham should make use of the word "duel" in likening "The Silver Fox" to a "duel of infidelity," which was the term he used in describing the play when asked to epitomize it in a sentence, for doubtless he still has vivid recollections of the dashing, chivalrous

adventurer whose sword was ever at the service of the little penniless friend who proved to be his king, in "The Prince and the Pauper." Mr. Faversham continued with a sincerity and enthusiasm for the fine writing of this play, which rang so true that it left no doubt in one's mind of the pleasure which he and his cast experience in interpreting their respective parts.

"The epigrammatic elegance of Wilde," added Mr. Faversham, "the polished subtleties of Clydeitch-Shavian satire touched with pardonable cynicism—these are the metals that Cosmo Hamilton has re-created in the playwright's crucible and transmuted into the highly tempered blade of brilliant comedy which he has named 'The Silver Fox.'"

"The curtain rises upon an atmosphere charged with challenge, as in our hands we bear the weapons of wit which Mr. Hamilton has tendered us. There are a few moments given us in which to bow to each other, as it were, with studied courtesy; salute with a flourish of blades. Then swiftly are the rapiers of persiflage brought into play; the fence and flash of nimble minds; the parry and thrust of repartees, heightened by satire, as sparks that fly when steel meets steel. Never a suspicion of vulgar jesting to grate upon one's sense, or nonsensical vapors to fall harshly upon one's ears with their deadly metallic clang. "But why the 'duel of infidelity' you may ask. Because all of the five characters in 'The Silver Fox' have only the spirit of supreme egotism for their cause. Mr. Hamilton has evolved a delightfully piquant situation and then has allowed his characters to hold up the mirror to the artificiality or modern society, showing its people not only unfaithful to each other but to themselves."

Oh, man, what a grand and glorious feeling! Hiding all pose, burning passion, and that slightly eruption almost haled already. That's what Faversham does. The first laugh gives relief and a few days' treatment is enough to clear the skin. There's nothing like this. It's for skin in trouble. 50c all samples.

Established 1807

COWPERTHWAIT & SONS

3d Avenue and 121st Street 2212 to 2224 Third Avenue

Make your house a real home, in which your children can have all the fun that rightly belongs to young people; where they may spend their evenings happily with you, or invite their friends to come for games or dancing.

Then you need never worry about outside attractions drawing them from you.

Harlem Store Open Monday Evenings Both Stores Open Saturday Evenings

Chippendale 10-Pc. Suite Reduced from \$750 to \$490 In English Brown Mahogany. Mirror \$28 Extra. Payable \$6 Weekly.

Louis XV. Walnut 4-Piece Suite Reduced from \$275 to \$198 Payable \$2.50 Weekly

Special Dinner Sets

For Fall Preserving Use Aluminum

100-Piece Set (2 patterns) \$14.95 50-Piece Sets \$7.50 (Many others to select from.)

Cowperthwait & Sons "Oldest Furniture House in America" 3rd Ave. and 121st St. 2212 to 2224 Third Avenue Downtown Store: 193 to 205 Park Row Between City Hall "Sub" Station and Chatham Sq. "L" Station

adventurer whose sword was ever at the service of the little penniless friend who proved to be his king, in "The Prince and the Pauper." Mr. Faversham continued with a sincerity and enthusiasm for the fine writing of this play, which rang so true that it left no doubt in one's mind of the pleasure which he and his cast experience in interpreting their respective parts.

Oh, man, what a grand and glorious feeling! Hiding all pose, burning passion, and that slightly eruption almost haled already. That's what Faversham does. The first laugh gives relief and a few days' treatment is enough to clear the skin. There's nothing like this. It's for skin in trouble. 50c all samples.

Poslam heals stubborn itching eczema. Oh, man, what a grand and glorious feeling! Hiding all pose, burning passion, and that slightly eruption almost haled already. That's what Faversham does. The first laugh gives relief and a few days' treatment is enough to clear the skin. There's nothing like this. It's for skin in trouble. 50c all samples.